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The Indonesia Human Rights Campaign

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**Campaign of protest against UN Population Award to Suharto**

It had been announced by the UN Population Award Committee that one of the two recipients of this year's UN Population Award will be President Suharto. We invite you to join us in a campaign of protest against this decision. The purpose will be to convince the UN Population Committee to rescind it and to expose Indonesia's population policy, particularly in East Timor. Suharto plans to go to New York for the Award ceremony on 8 June.

The enclosed Note has been prepared to help you in this campaign.

**Possible action**

1. Write to the following UN officials protesting at the Award and calling for it to be withdrawn:

Xavier Peres de Cuellar, Secretary General,
Room S - 3800 A, UN Secretariat,
New York, NY 10017

Dr Nafis Sudik, Director, UN Population Fund,
220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

Dr Mario Paya-Palencia, Chair, UN Population Award Committee,
Same address as for Dr Nafis Sudik

2. Write to your own government along similar lines.

3. Invite NGOs to join you in this campaign. We suggest that you approach your national UN Association and also write, asking for support, to:

Dr Marek Hagmayer, Director,
World Federation of UNA (WFUNA)
c/o UN Secretariat, Palais des Nations, 1211-CH Geneva

You could also approach other NGOs, particularly women's groups.

4. Broaden the campaign by writing to the World Bank which is a major source of funding for the programme, including the programme in East Timor. Write, protesting against the Bank's support for the programme, to:

Barber Conable, President,
The World Bank, 1818 H Street, NW,
Washington DC 20433

5. Please try to get the Award raised in the press. An article explaining why the Award should not be given, in a major national newspaper or journal, could have considerable effect on public opinion.

6. Inform us of actions you take for the purposes of publicity.

## *SUHARTO: POPULATION PIONEER OR SOCIAL ENGINEER?*

On June 8, 1989 President Suharto will go to New York to collect a UN Population Award in recognition of his "important work and international influence in population".

International influence is certainly Suharto's aim as he nears the end of his long reign in Indonesia. Having already won the US-based Population Institute's 'Global Statesman' award in population in December last year, with the UN prize, he will become firmly established in people's minds as a hero of development.

These are the reasons why Suharto should not receive the population prize:

### 1) Birth control complements killing and territorial aggression

Suharto's work in population has been important in more ways than one. Between half a million and one million people were killed when Suharto came to power in 1965; nobody has been tried for these killings and there have been no inquiries. Since the invasion of East Timor in 1975, his armed forces have obliterated almost one third of the population. Under his command, West Papuans opposing the Indonesian colonization of their country, have been slaughtered. At the same time the government goes ahead with plans to repopulate rebellious areas with Javanese transmigrants, in the case of West Papua, planning to outnumber the indigenous Papuans by four to one. Birth control complements these atrocities by reducing even further the already depopulated areas of resistance. It is a tool of territorial control.

### 2) Birth control used to make way for the transmigrants

Transmigration, the World Bank supported programme to transfer millions of people from Java and Bali to the outer islands, is the other side of the birth control equation. Transmigration has dispossessed indigenous outer islanders of their land and deprived them of their livelihood, led to the destruction of forests and degradation of land which cannot support high density populations, and has caused misery for destitute transmigrants, who cannot make a living from the land and yet are too poor to return home. Areas designated suitable for receiving transmigrants are also being targeted for birth control. The provincial governor of South Kalimantan publicly announced that the province had been designated a transmigration region and that "there is therefore no alternative - it must reduce the rate of population growth". (*Sinar Harapan* 30/5/85) In this way the "outer islanders", often less amenable to state authority, make way for the more loyal Javanese transmigrants.

### 3) Foreign aid and incentives lead to compulsion in birth control

A prestigious reputation in population assures Suharto of aid from foreign donors (some of whom make birth control successes a conditionality for aid). This is a major incentive for the President. The women on whom the President's reputation depends (for there is very little male contraception), must therefore also be given incentives. Where there are incentives there is little room for choice. Incentives range from the relatively mild - the mobilization of peer pressure, where if one woman in a village fails to register for family planning, the village does not get its new well, rice

thresher or other reward from the government - to the more direct, where local family planning officials resort to compulsion in order to reach targets set by the government; salaries have been withheld from the families of women failing to space pregnancies by at least four years and for having more than two children; unmarried women who become pregnant have been fined; and only those registered for family planning have been eligible for medical treatment. .

With incentives, although they make genuine choice impossible, at least women are aware that they are participating in the family planning programme. They can hardly ignore it; every time they go to the health clinic they are lectured on the benefits of the ideal two-child family; family planning placards adorn the village entrance and even traffic light jingles spread the family planning message. But in some areas, even more sinister than the brainwashing technique is the practice of sterilizing women, temporarily and permanently without their knowledge or consent.

Long-term acceptors are feted at well-publicised ceremonies presided over by Suharto and are designated as 'Soldiers of Development' (See Suharto's autobiography, *Soeharto: Pikiran, Ucapan dan Tindakan Saya*, 1988 page 226)

**4) Injectables and implants are used indiscriminately**

However family planning policy is implemented, there is also the question of what form of contraception is used. Again choice plays little part. Injectables such as Depo-provera and Noristerat (Net-Oen), used only in exceptional circumstances in the West owing to evidence of serious side-effects, are used in increasing amounts in Indonesia.

The side-effects of the more recently developed contraceptive implants are even less predictable than those of the injectables. Yet it is considered a matter of pride that half of the world production of implants is absorbed by Indonesia.(*Jakarta Post* 11/3/89)

The contraceptive methods which take little time to insert, inject or implant are much favoured in Indonesia because more women can be "processed" more cheaply and - unlike the pill or condom - sustained contraception is assured, the recipient being unable to reverse the process. But with these methods careful checking for suitability before and regular monitoring after contraception is imperative, if women are not to suffer some of the more avoidable side-effects. Yet an observation of 15 health centres in Jakarta revealed that "there is no counselling activity for women/mothers, everything went fast and in a great hurry." The centre staff "persuaded and even half forced mothers who have not participated in the family planning program to participate immediately, without giving any explanation of any sort." There were no blood pressure tests, no questions about medical history and complaints from those suffering side-effects were not followed up.(Report prepared by a group of Indonesian women for the 5th International Women and Health Meeting in Costa Rica 1987).

According to the report, "the implementation of the program does not include any consideration for the women who have to take all the risks; it only has one goal: to attain the target set by the government". Figures inspire the family planning programme. Figures are a source of official pride - and they win prizes for the President.

**5) Birth control programme in West Papua**

Since its annexation by Indonesia in 1963, tens of thousands - possibly more than a hundred thousand - of West Papuans have been killed, villagers as well as armed resistance fighters. Birth control is being imposed on West

Papuans without consideration for the wishes of the women. Here too it is the being implemented alongside transmigration - the government plans to bring in four million transmigrants, outnumbering the native inhabitants by four to one. Medical personnel believe that injectables are preferable to the pill in West Papua, a view frankly expressed by Dr Boyke Nian Nugraha, an obstetrician and member of a research team investigating conditions of the Asmat people (*Suara Karya*, 12/1/989)

## BIRTH CONTROL IN EAST TIMOR: AN ADJUNCT TO GENOCIDE

Indonesia's presence in East Timor is unlawful. The Indonesian government has no right to implement programmes of any kind. Since the Indonesian invasion in December 1975, there have been massacres and indiscriminate killing of East Timorese perpetrated by Indonesian troops. The forces of occupation have forcibly resettled the greatly-reduced population to suit their strategic objectives. Almost one third of the population of East Timor has been exterminated since 1975. Imposing family planning on people who traditionally favour large families and who desire above all to compensate for the loss of life since 1975 is like rubbing salt in the wound.

*It is scandalous that Suharto should be awarded a population prize at all but even more outrageous that this prize should be awarded by the United Nations which rejects and condemns Indonesia's presence in East Timor.*

As a predominantly Catholic people the East Timorese are also opposed to contraception on religious grounds. A clear rejection of the Indonesian birth control programme by the Catholic Church in East Timor is expressed in the Bishop of Dili's Pastoral Letter on Responsible Parenthood, issued in Dili on 3 March 1985. Mgr. Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, as Apostolic Administrator of Dili, has always had to watch his words, but his message was clear:

> *The Keluarga Berencana (Family Planning) that as we know is being practised in Timor consists simply of distributing pills to ignorant people or to give injections to unaware women with the intention to "conquer the largest number possible of people". We do not approve of this kind of Keluarga Berencana. We lament, we disagree and we disapprove of a Keluarga Berencana that does not inform the people, does not care for the Christian conscience of the majority of Timorese people who are Catholic and that does not have the minimal consideration for the doctrines of the Catholic Church.. .(from the English translation of the Portuguese text)*

The Family Planning Coordinating Board (BKKBN) have been busier in East Timor than in Indonesia itself. A report prepared by the Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association for the European Family Planning Associations based on 1986 figures revealed that Indonesia spends over twice as much per couple of fertile age in East Timor as it does in Indonesia and five times as much per couple of current users. According to the figures, in proportion to the number of fertile couples there are also more family planning personnel working in East Timor than in Indonesia. But far fewer public information meetings on family planning are held than in Indonesia and fewer visits are made to community leaders and homes. *East Timor News* (*Subject Memo* 4, May 1988) concludes:

> *these disparities seems to indicate a large degree of involvement on the part of the Indonesian authorities (expenditure and personnel) but at the same time little effort to get the Timorese to join in the programs of their*

*own free will... (and)* adds to the suspicions about the imposed nature of the program.

The remarkable disparity in the number of women using injectable contraceptives supports this view. In Indonesia, 29.1% of new acceptors were using injectables; in East Timor - a higher percentage than any Indonesian province - the figure is 64.4%. The "advantages" of Depo-provera and Net-Oen, as advertised by their manufacturers - long-lasting contraceptive effect, quick and easy application - are translated into disadvantages for the East Timorese. Popular and religious resistance to Indonesian state-sponsored family planning leads the officials, in order to achieve targets, to tap the potential for deception offered by the drug.. An IUD insertion is not easily mistaken for anything unrelated to reproduction, but the purpose of an injection is less easy to tell.

**Forced contraception in Dili**

The clearest evidence yet that women in East Timor are being sterilized or treated with contraceptive injectables without their knowledge has been revealed recently in Dili. Suspicions were aroused when all the girls but none of the boys at high schools were given injections and were told they were being given anti-tetanus injections. In response to widespread suspicion of the injections, the head of BKKBN, Hariyono Suyono denied in December 1988 that there was compulsion in the family planning programme in East Timor. This was followed by an angry outburst from East Timor Governor Mario Carrascalao in January this year reprimanding the health officers who had administered these injections, only confirming suspicions of a government cover-up. In an interview with the journal, *Matra* (January 1989), he explained how he was told that only the girls were being injected "so as to ensure that, if they get married later on and become pregnant, their children will not fall ill". Carrascalao immediately warned the officers that "birth control in East Timor is a sensitive issue" - thus confirming fears that the injections were in fact contraceptives. He seemed to be more concerned that the story would provide ammunition to overseas critics of the Indonesian government, than worried about the young women who had been temporarily sterilised without their knowledge or consent.

**World Bank aids and abets social engineering**

In 1985 a new family planning centre was opened in the East Timor capital of Dili. The World Bank provided 95% of the funds. By supporting birth control, run by the Indonesians for purposes of territorial control, the Bank is actively involved in promoting Indonesia's colonization of East Timor. The Bank thus recognises East Timor as an Indonesian province, contrary to the UN position.

One of the World Bank's working principles is that the decision on birth control must rest entirely with the individuals concerned. In East Timor this principle is continually being violated. It is the Indonesian government who fixes the target for family planning in East Timor; women are "persuaded" to limit the size of their families by incentives, pressure or pure deception so that these targets are met. Yet the Bank ignores its role as supporter of the unlawful Indonesian occupation of East Timor and promoter of a particularly objectionable programme for the people of East Timor.

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